truck industry news

Compact pickups only trucks to show first-half gain

6-month sales off 29 pct. from '79

Higher costs of product, fuel and money, plus the slump in the general economy, caused first-half retail sales of new trucks in the U. S. to fall to their lowest level in five years, with declines in all market segments except compact pickup trucks.

In the first six months of 1980, franchised dealers and factory outlets retailed 1,338,878 units, according to preliminary reports, a decline of 29 percent below last year's 1,883,437 and 36.6 percent below the record 2,112,117 sold in the first half of 1978. In 1975, the six-month count was only 1,090,843.

Although sales in June were down from those in the same month a year ago, the rate of decline was the lowest for any month since last September.

During the month, an estimated 230,117 units were retailed, off 17.4 percent from the 278,514 sold in June, 1979.

In the January-June period, there were substantial decreases in sales in the three market segments, with mediums showing the biggest losses.

Light-truck sales dropped 28.4 percent below the year-ago total, from 1,680,690 units in 1979 to 1,202,716. However, the compact pickups—the Japanese imports and the U. S.-built Volkswagen—were up 8.6 percent to 269,734 units, compared with 248,377 a year ago.

• Heavy-truck sales in the first half totaled 89,607 units, down 25.1 percent from the record 119,600 retailed in the like period of 1979. Mediums dropped 44 percent below the year-ago total, from 83,143 to 46,555.

Sales of the compact pickups in June were down from last year for the third consecutive month, but the decline was small. Dealers retailed 38,665 units during the month, off 0.6 percent from the year-ago 38,910.

The Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Assn. reported sharp declines in the number of unsold

Table on Page 18.

light and medium trucks in retailers' hands at the end of the first half, and a small drop in heavy-truck stocks.

Inventories totaled 638,787 units going into July, a decline of 41.2 percent from the 1,085,610 on hand at the same time in 1979.

Light trucks, excluding the non-captive Japanese imports, were down 43.7 percent, from 971,884 a year ago to 547,362. There were 32,916 mediums on hand, off 37.7 percent from last year's 52,864, and the heavies were down 3.9 percent to 58,509 units, compared with 60,862 a year ago.

Six-month sales by the nation's Big Three dealers totaled 1,080,996 units, a decline of 34 percent from last year's 1,637,953. The June total was down 21.1 percent, from 239,256 a year ago to 188,683. Big Three totals

Continued on Page 18, Col. 3

Big Three June, year-to-date truck sales

	June		Year to date	
	1980	1979	1980	1979
Ford				
Vans	7,965	14,974	55,873	98,454
Club Wagon	2,179	3,367	13,660	23,219
Courier	5,544	5,915	40,077	42,899
Bronco	5,342	4,263	20,945	35,994
Conventional pickups	45,813	59,315	252,121	383,902
Mediums	5,267	7,913	28,482	39,119
Heavies	1,164	2,259	7,821	12,317
Chevrolet				
Vans	7,151	13,669	50,339	94,590
Sportvan	1,342	2,834	9,793	17,474
LUV	5,979	7,294	47,721	56,477
El Camino	3,019	4,268	21,407	25,045
Blazer	4,148	3,938	16,578	32,326
Suburban	2,377	3,556	12,366	23,825
Conventional pickups	49,713	51,163	246,888	362,800
Mediums	2,450	3,095	16,057	21,347
Heavies	160	286	1,276	1,860
Chrysler				
Vans	5,566	8,026	37,700	75,752
Voyager	610	997	3,727	5,315
Sportsman	2,475	3,346	12,270	17,443
Arrow	1,355	1,302	10,451	8,174
D-50	3,269	3,094	22,388	17,703
Trail Duster	217	227	2,094	3,024
Ramcharger	502	832	4,593	8,414
Conventional pickups	6,565	11,806	43,408	75,498
GMC				
Vans	1,604	3,161	12,490	22,927
Caballero	377	556	2,303	3,377
Jimmy	835	747	3,292	6,762
Suburban	500	674	2,458	4,385
Conventional pickups	11,740	11,747	56,222	86,683
P models	317	662	2,161	2,924
Mediums	1,562	2,388	13,437	15,920
Heavies	1,576	1,553	10,598	11,681
Motor homes	.....	31	.....	323

factories list auction dates

American Motors

July 22—Aptco Auto Auction, 20911 Gladwin, Taylor, Mich.; Ohio Auto Auction, Columbus, O.; D-A Auto Auction, Waltz Mill Rd., New Stanton, Pa.

July 23—Kansas City Automobile Auction, 1100 Elmwood Ave., Kansas City, Mo.

July 25—Floyd Hauhe Auto Auction, 12000 St. Charles Rock Rd., Bridgeton, Mo.; Concord Auto Auction, Hosmer St., Acton, Mass.

July 30—Southern Auto Sales, S. Main St., Warehouse Point, Conn.

July 31—Fredericksburg Auto Auction, U. S. 1 Alt., Fredericksburg, Va.

Chrysler Corp

July 21—*Clanton's Auto Auction, 1027 Pearl St., Darlington, S. C.; Arena Auto Auction, 10355 S. Woodlawn, Chicago.

July 22—*Hatfield Recon Center, Rte. 309, Hatfield, Pa.; Birmingham Recon Center, 101 Miles Pkwy., Industrial Park, Pell City, Ala.; South Seattle Auto Auction, 19443 76th Ave. S., Kent, Wash.; Chrysler Leasing Corp. Used Vehicle Marshaling and Auction Center, 3500 W. MacArthur Blvd., Santa Ana, Calif.

July 23—St. Pete Auto Auction, 14950 Roosevelt Blvd., Clearwater, Fla.; *Al Eide's Minneapolis Auto Auction, 1125 A Nathan Lane N., Minneapolis; Meyer & Sons, 6464 Downing St., Denver.

July 24—*Auto City, 440 McClellan Hwy., East Boston, Mass; *Barberton Recon Center, 5075 Wooster Rd. W., Barberton, O.; *Big H Recon Center, 918 Asbury, Houston.

July 25—*Floyd Hauhe Auto Auction, 12000 St. Charles Rock Rd., Bridgeton, Mo.

July 28—*Clanton's Auto Auction, 1027 Pearl St., Darlington, S. C.; Arena Auto Auction, 10355 S. Woodlawn, Chicago.

July 29—*Hatfield Recon Center, Rte. 309, Hatfield, Pa.; *Birmingham Recon Center, 101 Miles Pkwy., Industrial Park, Pell City, Ala.; *Metro Auto Auction of Kansas City, 101 W. Oldham Pkwy., Lee's Summit, Mo.; *Southwest Auto Auction, 3420 S. 48th St., Phoenix.

July 30—St. Pete Auto Auction, 14950 Roosevelt Blvd., Clearwater, Fla.; *Al Eide's Minneapolis Auto Auction, 1125 A Nathan Lane N., Minneapolis.

July 31—*Barberton Recon Center, 5075 Wooster Rd. W., Barberton, O.; Golden Gate Auto Auction, 6010 Stevenson Blvd., Fremont, Calif.

*Tentative—due to inventory shortages, some auctions are scheduled on a tentative basis. Please contact these locations before planning to attend.

Ford Motor Co.

July 22—Arena Auto Auction, 10355 S. Woodlawn Ave., Chicago.

July 23—Golden Gate Auto Auction, 6010 Stevenson Blvd., Fremont Blvd.; Metro Auto Auction of Kansas City, 101 W. Oldham Pkwy., Lee's Summit, Mo.

July 24—Skyline Auto Exchange, 100 Rte. 46, Fairfield, N. J.

July 30—Dallas Auto Auction, 4226 E. Main, Dallas; Northway Exchange, Rte. 146, Clifton Park, N. Y.

July 31—Columbus Fair Auto Auction, 4700 Groveport Rd., Obetz, O.; 166 Auto Auction, 2944 W. Sunshine, Springfield, Mo.

Used car sales

Auction averages

July to date	$3,156
Month ago	$3,325
Year ago	$2,838

Model breakdown

Auction averages

	July to Date	June	May
1980	$5,521	$5,821	$6,050
1979	4,827	4,650	4,610
1978	3,552	3,501	3,498
1977	3,000	2,981	2,578
1976	2,191	2,328	2,177
1975	1,655	1,772	1,662
1974	1,281	1,343	1,203
1973	889	1,084	1,007
Overall Average	$3,156	$3,349	$3,183

Year's total is off 30 pct. from 1979 level

Week's auto production falls 9 pct.

By Michele Raquepau
Staff Writer

Auto production by U. S. makers last week of 93,582 fell 9.39 percent from the 103,280 assembled in the previous week, and dropped 30.75 percent from the 135,135 built in the comparable 1979 week.

Year-to-date car output of 3,711,638 is a 30.31-percent decline from the 5,325,871 produced by this date in 1979.

American Motors' Kenosha (Wis.) plant is down until July 21. AMC has 2.53 percent of year-to-date production.

Chrysler Corp.'s Belvidere plant was the only Chrysler assembly point that worked last week and will be the only plant working this week. Belvidere produced 6,100 Omni and Horizon models last week, and the company has 9.51 percent of year-to-date production.

Chrysler's Jefferson Ave. plant, which has been under conversion for the 1981-model Plymouth Reliant and Dodge Aries, is scheduled to begin production July 29.

Start-up dates for production of 1981 models at St. Louis (LeBaron, Diplomat, Caravelle) is Aug. 4. At Newark (Reliant, Aries), production is planned to begin Aug. 15, and at Lynch Rd. (New Yorker, St. Regis, Gran Fury), output of 1981 model cars begins Sept. 11.

All General Motors car assembly plants worked last week, producing a total of 79,483 cars. GM has 65.61 percent of year-to-date output.

Last week and this, a total of eight GM car assembly plants will close for changeover to production of 1981-model cars.

GM's Lansing point (Cutlass, Delta 88, 98), built out last week, as did its Fremont (Century, Regal, Malibu, Monte Carlo) and Janesville (Chevrolet) plants.

This week, GM's Flint (Century, Regal, LeSabre, Electra), Detroit (Cadillac) and Framingham (Century, Regal, Cutlass) points will close for changeover, as will its Linden (Riviera, Toronado, Eldorado, Seville) and Norwood (Camaro, Firebird) plants.

A total of 3,624 Pinto and Bobcat models were assembled at Ford Motor Co.'s Metuchen point, the only Ford assembly plant which worked last week. Ford has 19.15 percent of the year's total domestic output.

Volkswagen of America assembled 4,375 units last week and has 3.16 percent of year-to-date production.

Checker Motors, which is down until Aug. 4, has 0.04 percent of year-to-date output.

U.S. truck output slides again, to 14,853 for week

U. S. truck production last week of 14,853 dropped 13.15 percent from the 17,101 of the previous week, and declined 64.17 percent from the 41,457 assembled in the comparable 1979 week.

Year-to-date truck production of 888,499 is a 58.20-percent slide from the 2,125,783 built by this date in 1979.

Chevrolet has 31.09 percent of year-to-date production, and Ford Motor Co. has 33.04 percent.

The breakdown for the other truck makers is Dodge/Plymouth, 9.52 percent; GMC, 10.63 percent; International, 3.28 percent; Mack, 1.62 percent; Jeep, 5.75 percent; AM Corp., 0.60 percent; miscellaneous trucks, 2.60 percent, and Volkswagen of America, 1.87 percent.

All Ford truck assembly plants were closed last week for vacation and changeover, as was Chrysler Corp.'s Warren point. Warren is scheduled to begin production of 1981 models Aug. 11.

American Motors' Jeep plant will be down until the end of July.

International Harvester's Fort Wayne plant will be down this week for the third successive week.

General Motors' Flint assembly point is scheduled to close this Friday (July 25) for changeover to production of 1981 model trucks. Line one at Chevrolet Flint has been closed since June 30.

GM's Lordstown van line will be down this week for the second of two weeks, idling 850 workers.

Canadian output of autos declines; trucks up 79 pct.

Canadian auto makers built 12,716 cars last week, a decline of 6.58 percent from the 13,612 assembled in the previous week.

Last week's figure was a 8.28 percent rise over the 11,744 autos produced in the comparable 1979 week.

Year-to-date auto output of 497,859 is a 19.08 percent drop from the 615,264 units produced by this time in 1979.

Truck output in Canada last week of 5,506 rose 79.64 percent over the 3,065 of the previous week, and was an increase of 11.34 percent over the 4,945 of the comparable 1979 week.

Year-to-date truck production of 297,502 is a 28.86-percent decline from the 418,219 produced by this date in 1979.

Chrysler Corp.'s Windsor auto assembly plant will be closed until 1981 model production begins Aug. 4. Its Pillette Road plant is scheduled to begin 1981 output of vans July 28.

Ford Motor Co.'s Oakville plant is scheduled to reopen July 28. Oakville will assemble 1980 models until Aug. 18, when production of 1981 models begins.

Ford's St. Thomas plant, which will reopen today (July 21), will begin 1981 output Aug. 12.

International Harvester is scheduled to reopen today (July 21).

All General Motors car and truck assembly plants are planning to work regular hours until changeover begins in late August.

U.S. CAR PRODUCTION

	Week Ended July 19, 1980	Same Week 1979	Week Ended July 12, 1980	July to Date	Jan. 1, to July 21, 1979	Jan. 1, to July 19, 1980
AMERICAN MOTORS	.....	3,500*	.....	.....	81,069*	93,913
Eagle	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Concord	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
'78 AMX	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Pacer	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Spirit	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
CHRYSLER CORP.	6,100	13,585	11,322	19,884	564,589	352,793
Plymouth Total	3,400	5,826	4,148	8,526	225,756	160,593
Horizon	3,400	3,157	3,344	7,419	95,002	91,460
Volare	.....	2,669	511	642	125,296	51,740
'80 Gran Fury	.....	.....	163	281	.....	13,310
Caravelle	.....	.....	130	184	5,456	4,083
Chrysler Total	.....	2,671	2,797	3,328	120,503	47,820
Chrysler	.....	2,671	828	911	55,102	11,513
LeBaron	.....	.....	1,969	2,417	65,401	36,304
Dodge Total	2,700	5,088	4,377	8,030	218,330	144,380
Omni	2,700	2,923	2,661	5,910	85,559	79,171
St. Regis	.....	527	238	364	18,513	10,725
Diplomat	.....	.....	1,134	1,355	30,044	17,585
Aspen	.....	1,638	344	401	84,214	36,899
FORD MOTOR	3,624	27,269	4,200	12,480	1,298,999	710,779
Ford Division	3,202	22,214	3,585	9,993	847,308	526,487
Pinto	3,202	3,923	3,585	7,368	109,379	68,358
Mustang II/Mustang	.....	8,617	.....	1,172	224,356	139,900
Fairmont	.....	5,864	.....	545	112,764	143,497
Granada	.....	1,185	.....	525	88,659	49,412
LTD II	.....	.....	.....	.....	22,746	.....
Thunderbird	.....	2,108	.....	.....	177,883	74,793
Ford	.....	517	.....	383	111,521	50,527
L-M Division	422	5,055	615	2,487	451,691	184,292
Mercury Total	422	5,055	615	2,227	355,134	166,038
Bobcat	422	1,039	615	1,161	29,197	12,348
Capri	.....	2,334	.....	263	66,351	40,144
Zephyr	.....	1,437	.....	216	38,851	45,863
Monarch	.....	245	.....	331	42,516	16,409
Cougar/XR7	.....	.....	.....	.....	104,958	23,752
Mercury	.....	.....	.....	256	73,261	27,522
Lincoln Total	.....	.....	.....	260	96,557	18,254
Lincoln	.....	.....	.....	122	48,191	7,036
Versailles	.....	.....	.....	.....	8,898	1,861
Mark VI	.....	.....	.....	138	39,468	9,357
GENERAL MOTORS	79,483	87,133	82,338	179,117	3,270,574	2,435,122
Buick Division	15,819	7,549	16,740	35,888	480,119	481,498
Skyhawk	.....	445	.....	.....	14,499	.....
Skylark/'79-'80	4,233	2,974	4,481	9,569	48,980	130,885
Century	3,435	631	3,902	8,106	31,983	106,625
Regal	4,031	3,403	4,256	9,159	170,154	126,927
Buick	3,415	96	3,392	7,490	177,165	90,000
Riviera	705	.....	709	1,564	37,338	27,061
Cadillac Division	4,140	1,172	4,106	9,075	240,027	121,077
Seville	695	.....	689	1,532	30,574	20,585
Cadillac	2,120	1,172	2,120	4,676	161,789	68,590
Eldorado	1,325	.....	1,297	2,867	47,664	31,902
Chevrolet Division	34,893	47,688	32,072	73,812	1,402,694	1,021,221
Chevette	9,765	10,958	9,597	21,258	238,443	261,399
Monza	3,400	3,464	3,161	7,259	90,370	97,530
Camaro	2,540	5,797	2,487	5,532	174,498	75,582
Nova/Citation	9,956	7,247	9,913	21,597	140,692	271,876
Malibu	5,134	8,574	5,225	11,533	248,015	158,431
Monte Carlo	898	4,153	915	2,016	150,881	58,984
Chevrolet	2,400	6,514	.....	2,883	332,143	72,475
Corvette	800	981	774	1,734	27,652	24,944
Oldsmobile Division	15,895	16,091	19,407	39,138	671,105	474,688
Starfire	.....	496	.....	.....	12,302	.....
Omega/'79-'80	2,356	1,597	2,270	5,102	22,992	69,247
Cutlass	10,949	8,139	11,396	24,378	336,521	242,134
Oldsmobile	1,590	5,859	4,185	7,501	263,416	139,076
Toronado	1,000	.....	956	2,157	35,874	24,231
Pontiac Division	8,736	14,633	10,013	21,204	476,629	336,638
Acadian†	215	291	403	688	11,600	13,730
Sunbird	3,018	2,186	2,978	6,574	58,893	85,577
Phoenix/'79-'80	2,768	2,205	2,994	6,296	39,574	79,573
Firebird	1,540	4,499	1,545	3,396	130,429	49,348
LeMans	.....	1,863	279	536	60,123	34,611
Grand Prix	.....	2,079	613	1,079	64,152	35,440
Pontiac	1,195	1,510	1,201	2,635	111,858	38,359
VOLKSWAGEN	4,375	3,565	5,420	10,734	107,954	117,461
CHECKER	.....	83	.....	.....	2,686	1,570
Total Cars, N. S.	93,582	135,135	103,280	222,215	5,325,871	3,711,638

CANADIAN CAR PRODUCTION

	Week Ended July 19, 1980	Same Week 1979	Week Ended July 12, 1980	July to Date	Jan. 1, to July 21, 1979	Jan. 1, to July 19, 1980
CHRYSLER CORP.	.....	.....	.....	404	73,501	38,578
FORD MOTOR	1,104	.....	1,164	3,635	181,612	145,491
GENERAL MOTORS	11,387	11,564	12,246	26,049	355,079	307,885
VOLVO	225	180	202	427	5,072	5,905
Total Cars, Canada	12,716	11,744	13,612	30,515	615,264	497,859
N. American Cars	106,298	146,879	116,892	252,730	5,941,135	4,209,497
N. American Trucks	20,359	46,402	20,166	47,163	2,544,002	1,186,001
North American Cars and Trucks	126,657	193,281	137,058	299,893	8,485,137	5,395,498

†—All Acadians and Caravelles are built for sale in Canada. *—Estimated.

TRUCK PRODUCTION IN U. S.†

	Week Ended July 19, 1980	Same Week 1979	Week Ended July 12, 1980	July to Date	Jan. 1, to July 21, 1979	Jan. 1, to July 19, 1980
CHEVROLET	7,161	19,826	8,062	16,807	666,018	276,271
DODGE/PLYMOUTH	.....	648	1,185	1,893	255,089	84,580
FORD	.....	10,882	.....	1,514	764,543	293,535
GMC	3,552	8,558	3,651	7,907	216,066	94,443
INTERNATIONAL	2,180	.....	2,183	4,609	76,884	29,129
MACK	460	843	339	870	21,858	14,432
JEEP	.....	.....	.....	.....	87,699*	51,105
AM CORP.	225*	.....	225*	495*	13,426*	5,279*
VOLKSWAGEN	625	.....	771	1,528	.....	16,590
MISCELLANEOUS	650*	700	685	1,506*	24,200	23,135*
Total Trucks, U. S.	14,853	41,457	17,101	37,129	2,125,783	888,499

CANADIAN TRUCK PRODUCTION

	Week Ended July 19, 1980	Same Week 1979	Week Ended July 12, 1980	July to Date	Jan. 1, to July 21, 1979	Jan. 1, to July 19, 1980
CHRYSLER CORP.	.....	.....	.....	.....	40,108	22,198
FORD MOTOR	2,784	588	324	3,908	154,925	106,565
GENERAL MOTORS	2,682	4,221	2,682	5,928	176,744	147,228
AMERICAN MOTORS	.....	.....	.....	.....	32,900	11,644
INTERNATIONAL	.....	.....	.....	94	11,345	8,484
MACK	40	136	59	104	2,197	1,383
Total Trucks, Canada	5,506	4,945	3,065	10,034	418,219	297,502
N. American Trucks	20,359	46,402	20,166	47,163	2,544,002	1,186,001

*—Revised. †—Now includes van production. *—Estimated.
Jeep includes commercial vehicles only. AM General includes government-destined vehicles.

7/30/80 C2700-1 U

Automotive News

Detroit, July 28, 1980

© Entire contents copyright, 1980, by Crain Automotive Group, Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction or use of editorial content in any manner without permission is strictly prohibited.

55th year—$35 per year, $1.00 per copy

New from 'Mother Russia'

Model changeover time at the Lada works?

Russian designers at the Lada plant in Togliatti took the lowline 2101 model, added crisper body lines and rectangular headlamps and created this updated version (above), the 2105. It's the first major styling change for the Fiat 124-based sedans in a decade. The 2105 recently went into production, but affluent Russians will have to wait at least a year before they can buy the all-new 2107 luxury sedan (below). For a look inside the 2107, see the photo on Page 7.

NADA sees improved factory-dealer relations

New GM franchise lauded

By Richard A. Wright
Assistant Managing Editor

A "new era" of greater cooperation and improved factory-dealer relations is being ushered in by the new General Motors franchise agreement, according to some dealer spokesmen.

GM people are reluctant to say that the situation has not been one of cooperation and good relations, but they are clearly pleased with dealer reaction to the new agreement, which virtually all GM dealers will sign this week. The contract goes into effect Nov. 1.

The new five-year agreement was the result of much consultation between NADA and GM and "incorporates in whole or in part many of NADA's major proposals and is shorter, more understandable, more objective and far less onerous" than the current franchise agreement, according to NADA President George S. Irvin. Irvin is a Chevrolet and import dealer in Denver.

Buddy Derrick Jr., Pontiac-Cadillac-GMC-AMC-Jeep dealer in Lexington, Va., and chairman of the NADA Industry Relations Committee, said the current agreement, which was introduced in 1975, was "harsh, punitive and dictatorial."

"The language was abrasive," he said, "and NADA positions were ignored." The contract was the source of much discontent expressed at the NADA convention that year.

For the first time, the 1980 franchise agreement is between the dealer and GM, not one of its divisions, a reflection of GM's shift toward a corporate approach to dealer relations. It is also less complicated and shorter than before — 21 pages compared with 35.

GM is presenting the new contract to its dealers this week, although the current agreement does not expire until Nov. 1, and GM zone personnel will be present at meetings to answer any questions the dealers might have.

Robert D. Burger, GM vice president, Marketing Staff, said that five years ago GM told its dealers to have their lawyers look at the franchise agreement. That may have been a mistake because dealers' lawyers saw the document as one-sided and not in the dealer's best interest.

"We wanted to write this contract more clearly," Burger said. "I have always taken the view that if we are to be an effective organization, we have to be fair to our dealers—whatever the contract says."

And Derrick said that in practice GM was not as tough as the 1975 contract indicated it could be. In fact, GM issued a clarifying letter in 1976 softening the harsh sound of the contract.

• Walter Huizenga, NADA chief counsel and executive director, legal, regulatory and industry affairs, listed four reasons for

Continued on Page 41, Col. 1

Chrysler here to stay, says Treasury's Miller

WASHINGTON. — Chrysler Corp. is here to stay, Treasury Secretary G. William Miller said last week.

Testifying before the Senate Finance Committee on the wisdom of a tax cut this year, Miller said the firm will be successful in its attempt for solvency and predicted that it would not require any more government assistance after 1983.

The Chrysler of the future will not sell as many vehicles as it did in its heyday, he said, but it will be a profitable concern.

Chrysler is in a unique position to take advantage of a marketplace demanding smaller, fuel-efficient cars, Miller said. It is on the leading edge of developing technology in front-wheel-drive, fuel-efficient vehicles.

"We are confident it will recover from its current woes," he said.

Miller also said it was extremely important that government be supportive of the auto industry as it goes through its $80 billion turnaround program. Industry needs government help and the U. S. must provide it, he said.

Miller is also chairman of the Chrysler Loan Guarantee Board. Earlier this month he and the rest of the board authorized another $250 million drawdown by Chrysler on the $1.5 billion in guaranteed loans the government has authorized for the firm. Chrysler has now used half of the guaranteed money available to it.

While granting the additional funds, Miller had said the situation for the firm was now "iffier," given the downturn in the U. S. economy.

But he also said that with the further restructuring of the firm (a plan has been promised for Sept. 1 by Chrysler Chairman Lee Iacocca) and an upturn in the market, the company has a reasonable prospect of viability.

Murphy, Nevin open Automotive News program

World Congress gets under way

DEARBORN. — General Motors Chairman Thomas A. Murphy took the podium last night to deliver his keynote speech to some 500 registrants plus guests and family members for the opening of the fifth Automotive News World Congress.

The registrants, who will be students of the automotive industry and related businesses for 3½ days, traveled to the Hyatt Regency Hotel here to listen to 34 experts on every aspect of the industry.

Murphy was followed Sunday night by John J. Nevin, president and chief operating officer of the nation's second largest tire maker, Firestone Tire & Rubber Co.

The 1980 World Congress is the fifth annual conference presented by Automotive News. The series began in 1976 as a unique forum for the exchange of information among persons close to the U. S. auto industry.

The blue-ribbon faculty is made up of trend-setters and thought-shapers at every level. Its members represent auto makers, dealers, suppliers, financiers, leasing, government, business management and entrepreneurs.

"The need is even greater today for automotive professionals to gather, get the latest information from industry leaders and talk among themselves in a stimulating setting," said Keith E. Crain, publisher and editorial director of Automotive News.

"It is gratifying that so many of those who attended our first four World Congresses have returned for this one. And we are happy to welcome those who are joining us for the first time."

More than 250 companies and organizations from around the globe were represented as sessions began Sunday evening.

A check of the roll showed registrants from 32 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Also signed in were registrants from 10 foreign countries. Canada was best represented with more than 20. Mexico and England were joined by Sweden, Australia, Norway, West Germany, Spain, Japan and Kuwait.

After Michigan, the best-represented states at the World Congress were New Jersey, California and New York.

Registrants arriving Sunday afternoon were able to attend continuous presentations of the latest in automobile-related motion pictures presented by Modern Talking Picture Service of Chicago. Murphy and Nevin spoke following the gala opening-night dinner party.

The fifth annual Automotive News World Congress closes Wednesday noon.

AN JAN81
DC 20014CNGLIAG QE 01254 92001J
ACQ EDITOR
CONGRESSIONAL INFO SERV
7101 WISCONSIN AVE
WASHINGTON DC 20014

breaking news

NHTSA probing X-car brakes

WASHINGTON.—NHTSA is looking into reports of possible braking problems on General Motors X-cars. According to a spokesman for the agency, NHTSA is conducting an engineering analysis of the power brakes on the cars after receiving about a dozen complaints from owners that the vehicles were losing braking ability. GM has thus far produced about one million X-cars. NHTSA performs an engineering analysis prior to deciding whether to formally open a defect investigation.

Auto firms freed from FTC franchise rule

WASHINGTON.—The FTC has exempted all auto makers, domestic and import, from its franchise rule that requires franchisors to reveal detailed financial information to franchisees. The FTC said that the sale of most auto dealerships does not constitute the sale of a "franchise" within the meaning of the FTC rule and that certain other circumstances peculiar to the industry suggest that applications of the rule may be unnecessary.